

From: Jason M. Felice
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 11:03am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

As a consultant and business owner in Cronosys, LLC (<http://www.cronosys.com/>), I have taken a keen interest in the Microsoft Anti-trust case. As well as reading most of the news reporting of the subject, I've read most of the court transcripts.

As consultants, our business is multi-faceted, one of the things that we do is install Linux Internet servers. Over the years we have had numerous problems with clients' forced upgrades suddenly preventing communications from the client machine to one of our servers (I'm speaking of all different kinds of servers, not just one particular package -- mail servers, file servers, web servers, LDAP servers). A lot of times this is because Microsoft has bent or broken the open standards on which the Internet was built for its own short-sighted gains.

The current settlement does nothing to remedy this. In fact, most of the restrictions mentioned in the settlement, in my personal opinion, will be obsolete shortly after such a settlement agreement is signed--Microsoft is already poised to make it so. With .NET Microsoft can move all of the offending APIs out of the operating system and into a pay-per-use service provider. With the XBox (which the settlement as I interpret it seems to ignore) poised to invade the living room, and then replace set-top boxes, then replace most families' Internet access--couple this with .NET and they have technologically completely avoided any anti-trust remedy but still avoided any competition.

The best proposal I have heard comes from Richard Stallman, summarized here, but the full text is available at:

<http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/microsoft-antitrust.html>

1. Require Microsoft to publish complete documentation of all interfaces between software componenets, all communications protocols, and all file formats.
 - 1a) Prevent Microsoft from using non-disclosure agreements.
2. Require Microsoft to use its patents for defense only.
3. Require Microsoft to not certify any hardware as working with Microsoft software, unless the hardware's complete specifications have been published.

-Jason M. Felice
Consultant and Business Owner,
Cronosys, LLC

14701 Detroit Avenue
Lakewood, Ohio 44107